

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: DECEMBER 5, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS O'CONNOR
SHEEHAN
BENTLEY
KENNY
F. THOMAS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS TESSIER
STRAINER

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:

SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER
KATHY BAKER, FISCAL MANAGER
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISORS GIRARD
TAYLOR
VANNESS
TODD LUNT, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
JONATHAN ALEXANDER, THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

In the absence of Committee Chairman Tessier, Supervisor O'Connor, as Vice Chairman, called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 12:20 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 23, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Beginning with Agenda Item 1, Ms. Weaver presented the Overtime Report which was included in the agenda. She noted that the overtime incurred during the pay period ending November 23, 2008 was higher than what had been reported for the previous weeks and that the majority of the increase was attributed to an increase in after-hours Child Protective Services (CPS) reports. Ms. Weaver reported that the volume of CPS reports traditionally increased around the holidays and she expected the increased overtime figure to remain consistent for the remainder of the year. She noted that it was likely that the overtime incurred might increase further because the number of Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) applications had increased dramatically. Mr. O'Connor commented that even with the increases cited by Ms. Weaver, the amount of overtime reported was far lower than it had been previously and he commended Ms. Weaver for her efforts in achieving the reductions.

Ms. Weaver apprised that Agenda Item 2 pertained to a request for permission to hire a consultant for the POE (Point of Entry) NY Connects Project in connection with the Office for the Aging and Public Health Division. She said that a \$50,000 salary would be paid to the consultant which would be 100% funded through grants received from the State.

Mr. Thomas questioned how long the position would be retained and Ms. Weaver replied that it would remain in place as long as grant monies were available to fund it. She advised that the position would be abolished when the supporting grant funding ceased, which she estimated to be in two years time. Mr. Kenny asked if the consultant would be hired as an employee and Ms. Weaver replied in the negative, noting that the consultant would be hired on a contract basis and would receive no employee benefits.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request for permission to hire a consultant for the POE NY Connects Project and to retain the services as long as grant funding was available to fund the position and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes. Note: Subsequent to Committee action, it was determined by Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, that permission could not be given to enter into a contract for consultant services without first issuing an RFP (Request for Proposal). The motion was rescinded and Ms. Weaver was directed to proceed in working with the County Attorney's Office to develop the RFP and to return to the Committee with a request to award a contract for consultant services when a candidate was chosen.*

Agenda Item 3, Ms. Weaver announced included a request to enter into a contract with a consultant for POE NY Connects Program as referenced above.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to enter into a contract with a consultant for the POE NY Connects Project and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes. Note: Subsequent to Committee action, it was determined by Mrs. Sady that permission could not be given to enter into a contract for consultant services without first issuing an RFP. The motion was rescinded and Ms. Weaver was directed to proceed in working with the County Attorney's Office to develop the RFP and to return to the Committee with a request to award a contract for consultant services when a candidate was chosen.*

Proceeding to Agenda Item 4, Ms. Weaver apprised that in the past month she had met with two different agencies regarding procedures to reduce medicare fraud, those being Medify, who worked to reduce fraudulent claims made by Home Health Aides, and the Bonadio Group, a company that was involved in reducing fraudulent claims from self-employed Medicaid applicants and recipients. She said that she might be interested in contracting with these agencies in the future in an attempt to further reduce the occurrence of fraud. Ms. Weaver noted that she had worked with the Bonadio Group in the past and could attest to the fact that their efforts reduced fraudulent claims and the general return rate on the investment for their services was very good. She noted that in Genesee County, the Bonadio Group had identified 105 fraudulent claim reports and had saved the County approximately \$315,000. Ms. Weaver apprised that several other Counties throughout the State had entered into agreements with Medify to address fraud issues with Home Health Aides and she preferred to wait and see the results achieved in those Counties before seeking a contract for Warren County.

Mr. Kenny asked what the average cost for a contract with the Bonadio Group was and Ms. Weaver replied that the typical cost was \$150 per hour for two consultants that would work two to four hours per week. She added that the total expense would be in the range of 10% of the amount saved. Mr. Kenny questioned if the Bonadio Group would be paid from the savings realized and Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager, advised that their fees would be paid from Medicaid Administration monies which were 100% reimbursable through State funding. Ms. Weaver apprised that she preferred to delay in requesting the services of the Bonadio Group until more concise information was available with respect to the Medicare cases in place.

Mr. O'Connor asked if Home Health Aide claims were a problem in Warren County and Ms. Weaver responded that currently there was no way to determine the actual number of hours worked by the Home Health Aides and that a summary was used to determine the amount of time each Aide spent working in each patient's homes. She said that the fraud program implemented by Medify would include voice recognition software that would require the Home Health Aide to call from the patient's home upon arrival and departure to accurately log the amount of time spent at each home.

Continuing to Agenda Item 5, Ms. Weaver advised that she intended to establish a Local Advisory Committee, for which she would be seeking members. She said that quarterly Committee meetings would be held and she felt that a member of the Board of Supervisors should be included on the Committee. Ms. Weaver added that because presentations on the operations of each portion of the DSS would be made for the Committee's benefit, she felt it might be appropriate for Mr. Merlino to attend the Committee meetings as he frequently sought more information on the services provided by the Department.

Mr. O'Connor said that he felt it would be appropriate for Mr. Tessier, as Social Services Committee Chairman, to serve on the Local Advisory Committee and he encouraged Ms. Weaver to contact him with respect to the matter.

Ms. Weaver announced that Agenda Item 6 consisted of a request for transfer of funds which she outlined as follows:

<u>From Code:</u>	<u>Title:</u>	<u>To Code:</u>	<u>Title:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
A.6010 130	Salaries - Part Time	A.6010 120	Salaries - Overtime	\$15,000
A.6010 831	Medicare Contrib.	A.6010 850	Unemployment Ins.	2,000
A.6010 830	Social Security	A.6010 850	Unemployment Ins.	2,000
A.6010 865	Social Security	A.6010 860	Hospitalization	8,000
A.6010 865	Dental Insurance	A.6010 860	Hospitalization	100
A.6010 110	Salaries - Regular	A.6010 860	Hospitalization	96,000

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the request for transfer of funds as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request for transfer of funds is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing to Agenda Item 7, Ms. Weaver presented three separate requests to amend the County Budget which she outlined as follows:

- 1) Request to amend the County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$180,000.

Ms. Baker noted that the transaction included funds being reimbursed to the County by the State.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the County Budget in the amount of \$180,000 as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

- 2) Request to amend the County Budget to increase and decrease estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$51,000 to balance the Budget.

Ms. Baker advised that the transaction was comprised of funds available within the existing DSS Budget through Federal and State reimbursements which required no contribution of County dollars.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the County Budget as outlined above and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

- 3) Request to amend the County Budget to increase estimated appropriations in the amount of \$35,000

for the Local Share of State Training School costs with the source of funding to be determined.

Ms. Weaver explained that the State Training Schools were secured detention centers similar to prisons for juvenile delinquents. She said that they had yet to receive a bill for these services from the State for 2008; however, she noted, they had been notified that the costs would be much higher for 2008 than they had been in the past because the State was operating facilities at full staff with no children detained within them. Ms. Weaver apprised that the daily rate for these services was determined on a per-child, per-bed basis which was then billed to the appropriate Counties. She advised that Warren County had three children within the facilities for which they were awaiting a billing and they were afraid that the amount budgeted for 2008 would not be sufficient to support the amount charged by the State. Ms. Weaver apprised that for 2007, the expenses for State Training Schools had totaled over \$400,000 for these three children.

Ms. Baker advised that \$172,000 had been included in the 2008 Budget for these expenses and although a bill had yet to be received, she estimated that this would not be sufficient to cover the costs. She said that if the Committee so desired, she would pay the bill when it was received using funds from the 2009 Budget in connection with the funds remaining in the 2008 Budget; however, she said, she wanted the Committee to be fully aware that this might cause a shortage that would have to be addressed at the close of 2009. Mr. Kenny asked if there was any indication as to when a bill would be received from the State for these services and Ms. Baker replied in the negative.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the request to amend the budget not be approved and that Ms. Weaver should bring the matter to the attention of the Committee once again when a billing was received.

Resuming the agenda review, Ms. Weaver advised that Agenda Item 8 was a request to apply for \$75,000 in grant funding from the New York State Archives for supplies and staffing for an imaging project. She noted that \$75,000 was the maximum grant funding available and that no matching funds were required.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver stated that Agenda Item 9 pertained to the listing of items pending from prior Committee meetings, which she detailed as follows:

- 1) Regarding the profitability of purchasing vehicles versus issuing mileage reimbursement, Ms. Weaver apprised that she was awaiting further information from Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings, who served as Fleet Manager and that she would return to the Committee with this information once it was received;
- 2) Ms. Weaver apprised that she had spoken with Paul Dusek, County Attorney, with respect to the County's liability for DSS staff transporting children in County Vehicles. She said that Mr. Dusek had contacted the County's insurance agent on the matter, which was much more difficult to discern than previously thought, and he hoped to have a definite answer on the matter within two weeks.

Mr. Kenny noted that it had been some time since the information regarding mileage reimbursement had been requested of Mr. Morehouse and he asked why there had been a delay in receiving the information. Mr. Payne said that he did not know the cause of the delay but said that he would contact Mr. Morehouse and advise that the information should be prepared for presentation at the next Committee meeting.

Mr. Girard entered the meeting at 12:40 p.m.

Discussion ensued pertaining to mileage reimbursement.

Agenda Item 10, Ms. Weaver announced, was a request for an executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was held from 12:44 p.m. to 1:11 p.m.

Upon reconvening, Mr. O'Connor advised that no action was necessary pursuant to executive session.

As there was no further business to come before the Social Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. Sheehan and seconded by Mr. Thomas, Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist